


July 31, 1959

MEMORANDUM OF CONFERENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT
July 31, 1959 -- 11:15 AM

Others present: Secretary Dillon
Major Eisenhower

The President read a message from Secretary Herter (CAHTO 183) with regard to three major unresolved points at the Geneva conference, namely: (1) continuation of allied rights in Berlin, (2) reduction in troop levels, and (3) linkage of all-German talks with a time limit to be put on any temporary moratorium.

After reading the message, the President said that as far as military value is concerned, a troop level of 6000 is the equivalent of our present 11,000, that this is a policy question outside the sphere of the Department of Defense. If points (1) and (3) were agreed (favorably to the Western position) and announced, then he felt the allies could announce their readiness to make modest force reductions.

Mr. Dillon said that State's feeling coincides with that of the President. Couve de Murville has stated that if (1) and (3) are agreed, then the psychological impact of reduction of Western forces in Berlin to 8000 or 10,000 would be small. Mr. Dillon visualizes that all three points would be announced together. Our public statement would essentially say that since the allies and the USSR have reached agreement as to satisfactory language regarding the continuation of allied rights in Berlin, and since the Soviets have withdrawn their linkage of direct all-German talks with the time limit, we are therefore ready to make modest force reductions of our garrisons in Berlin. The President agreed and instructed Mr. Dillon to send a message to Mr. Herter over his signature to this effect and to send the President a copy. He authorized reducing forces to the levels proposed by Couve de Murville and asked that Brentano be kept informed of our position. He recognized that this will have a bad short-term effect on German morale, but said we can't do the impossible just to maintain German morale at a high level at all times.

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MR 80-182 #2
By DJH Date 5/25/81

~~TOP SECRET~~

Mr. Dillon then notified the President that Dr. Killian will go to Britain about August tenth in place of Dr. Bacher to brief on the subject of detection of underground test shots.

John S D Eisenhower

John S. D. Eisenhower



~~TOP SECRET~~